

**REPORT ON A VISIT TO UNDP NEW  
YORK TO ASSIST IN THE  
DEVELOPMENT OF A FOOD SECURITY  
STRATEGY WITHIN UNDP**

**Paul Hindmarsh and Ann Gordon  
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NRI**

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## **REPORT ON A VISIT TO UNDP NEW YORK TO ASSIST IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF A FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY WITHIN UNDP**

### **Summary**

This report concerns an ODA Advisory and Support Services funded visit to UNDP HQ undertaken by an NRI food security specialist and economist in April 1996. The purpose of the visit was to develop a framework for possible ODA support for the development of a strategy for handling food security issues within UNDP programmes. The consultants were asked to: (a) review UNDP's role in agriculture and food security, taking account of its mandate, its relationship to other international agencies, its experience, and existing strategies; (b) agree with UNDP staff clear statements of goal, purpose, strategies and output, together with key assumptions; and (c) identify human resource, information and dissemination needs.

UNDP is principally concerned with broad-based development and its co-ordination. Food security is widely seen as an important area of work which integrates five priorities within the overall emphasis on sustainable human development (poverty eradication, job creation, the advancement of women, regeneration of the environment, and governance). In addressing these issues, UNDP sees its role and comparative advantage in the cross-cutting, multi-sectoral, upstream (capacity-building and planning) areas, rather than with the narrower technical concerns.

UNDP funding of agricultural activities is considerable, with annual expenditure in the period 1987-1991 of US\$100-150 million (depending on the definition of agricultural project used). Until recently UNDP was a significant funder of FAO projects, but more projects are now being executed by national governments. Although there is undoubtedly considerable expertise in food security at UNDP, it is dispersed and there is currently no UNDP-wide focal point for food security issues. Notably, nor is there currently any strategy to guide UNDP-funded food security projects.

The Sustainable Energy and Environment Division, of the Bureau for Programme and Policy Support, provides technical backstopping and strategic input on NR-related issues to UNDP operational programmes. It proposes to lead in the development of a UNDP food security strategy. UNDP is requesting support from ODA and in addition proposes to recruit an agricultural adviser (to fill a position recently vacated).

Discussions held with UNDP staff and review of documentation indicate considerable interest in such a strategy within UNDP, and suggest that UNDP's comparative advantage lies in the broader food access and livelihood issues, rather than in narrower agricultural production issues. In the view of the authors, UNDP could usefully bring greater focus to the activities it currently funds, and help to co-ordinate and unite the work of other UN agencies around a broader definition of food security.

In doing this, UNDP is likely to encounter two important tensions: the first concerns the perceived relevance of BPPS's work by UNDP's Regional Bureaux; and the second concerns the comparative advantage and territories of different UN organisations. If UNDP is to increase its impact on food security, both issues need to be resolved. In developing a framework for the development of a strategy, the authors

have emphasised the importance of process in fostering both ownership of the strategy by UNDP country offices, and an effective division of responsibilities within the UN system.

## **Background**

UNDP has a mandate to co-ordinate inputs by UN agencies at country level. It is also mandated to assist capacity building to improve national skills in programming and co-ordination. Although FAO is the lead UN agency on food and agricultural issues, and should be recognised as such, it is important for UNDP to be able to integrate food security issues for the poor and environmentally sustainable agriculture within its own programmes; and to act in, and provide advice on, an intelligent customer capacity for the work of others on food security planning, encompassing the dual challenge of not only food production, but also food access by the poor through enhanced incomes and livelihoods.

ODA is considering providing support to UNDP for the development of a strategy for handling food security issues within UNDP programmes. The strategy will be consistent with the support of both ODA and UNDP for sustainable agricultural development.

The work reported here is based on a 2 week visit to UNDP HQ, in April 1996, by a food security specialist and an agricultural economist from the Natural Resources Institute.

## **Terms of Reference**

A. Review with UNDP staff in both central and geographic departments:

- the mandate of UNDP in relation to promotion of and direct support for sustainable agricultural production and enhanced access to food;
- the relationship of UNDP to other UN and international agencies in this work;
- the experience of UNDP to date in carrying out its mandated work;
- previous papers outlining proposed strategies and directives for UNDP's work in this area, as well as UNDP strategies for work in other areas of focus (e.g. energy).

B. Based on this analysis, agree with UNDP staff clear statements of the Goal and Purpose of UNDP work on enhancing food access. The Purpose agreed should clearly reflect the unique contribution that UNDP can make, and avoid raising concerns on duplication of the work of other agencies.

C. Identify with UNDP staff the broad Strategies and specific Outputs required (both at country level and in central departments) for UNDP to achieve this

Purpose; together with the assumptions that need to hold for the identified outputs to achieve the intended Purpose.

D. Particular attention should be given to the human resource, information and dissemination needs that achieving the identified Outputs would involve, and to the respective roles of UNDP country and central functions.

## **PART A**

### **UNDP's mandate in relation to sustainable agriculture and food security**

1. The UNDP is redefining and repositioning itself. The development of a strategy on food security is part of this process: it integrates the key dimensions of UNDP's core mission in sustainable human development; it will help focus an important area of UNDP-funded activity; and the process by which it is developed will contribute to the development of other UNDP strategies.

2. A consultative process with UN partners and governments exploring need, capacity and responsibility, points to sustainable human development as UNDP's core mission (Building a New UNDP: a strategic planning framework. UNDP, 1995).

*Sustainable human development is development that not only generates economic growth, but distributes its benefits equitably; that regenerates the environment instead of destroying it; that empowers people rather than marginalising them. It is development that gives priority to the poor, that enlarges their choices and opportunities, and that provides for their participation in events and decisions that shape their lives.*

Water Resources Management as an Instrument for Sustainable Human Development, draft, UNDP, December 1995.

3. In pursuit of sustainable human development, UNDP's Executive Board has directed UNDP to focus on poverty elimination, job creation, regeneration of the environment, the advancement of women and governance. To fulfil this mission, UNDP has three goals.

*The first focuses on strengthening international co-operation; the second on uniting the UN around SHD and the third, on UNDP's role in supporting SHD in programme countries...[These] three steps...lie within UNDP's sphere of influence and are hence realistic.*

*The combined challenge is therefore to manage the institution in line with UNDP's new mission, goals and focus while simultaneously delivering more effective and efficient assistance to developing countries in support of sustainable human development. The new mission reaffirms that UNDP is integral to the United Nations, with a particular role in development-oriented crises management and*

*other emerging priority areas. At the same time, UNDP is also viewed as a country-specific funding agency with its own focus of operation (SHD, Capacity-building, Co-ordination Services). UNDP's comparative advantage and relevance are seen in terms of the organization's universal country office network, neutrality, co-ordination and brokering role, capacity building function and its role in promoting people-centred sustainable development.*

UNDP Corporate Plan for 1995, Managing Change.

4. UNDP is thus adapting to a new mission and seeking mechanisms by which to increase its impact in this area. The development of strategies to guide UNDP's work falls to the Bureau of Policy and Programme Support, as one of several measures being taken within the organisation to sharpen its focus and impact. As part of the Centre of Experimentation initiative, SEED is being funded by ODA to develop mechanisms for effective implementation of strategies. Given that the process of strategy development clearly affects its potential uptake, SEED is particularly interested in developing and learning from this process.

5. Food security is seen within UNDP as an area of work which integrates the main concerns of UNDP (poverty alleviation, job creation, the advancement of women, regeneration of the environment and governance). Administrator Speth has consistently stressed the importance of food security in relation to UNDP's mandate.

*We must see sustainable food security as a fundamental aspect of global human security. It fuses the goals of household food security and sustainable agriculture; it requires both.* (Speth, 1993).

Yet within this broad area of sustainable agriculture and food security, the general view at UNDP HQ seems to be that technical issues relating to food production should be left to FAO whilst multi-sectoral issues relating to sustainable livelihoods and enhanced access to food fall within UNDP's remit.

6. UNCED also recognised food security as an area which integrates a number of development concerns and called upon governments and the UN organisations to work towards common goals in this area. The Earth Summit proposed twelve programme areas under the umbrella of promoting sustainable agriculture and rural development, one of which was, *Agricultural policy review, planning and integrated programming in the light of the multifunctional aspect of agriculture, particularly with respect to food security and sustainable development*. Proposed activities within this programme area include: national policy reviews (by Governments with the support of the relevant organizations) related to food security, including adequate levels and stability of food supply and access to food by all households; and the implementation of integrated and sustainable agricultural development and food security strategies at the sub-regional level that use regional production and trade potentials to promote food security. Note that these proposals (for access to food by *all* households) echo the widespread recognition that food security goes beyond production issues *per se*.

## **The relationship of UNDP to other UN and international agencies in this work**

7. There seems to be a shared view within UNDP, which is reflected in the relevant documentation, that UNDP's historical role and comparative advantage is cross-cutting, multi-sectoral, upstream (capacity-building and planning) and concerned with broad-based development and its co-ordination.

8. Historically UNDP has acted as donor agency for the rest of the UN system with a mandate for in-country co-ordination of UN activities. Line ministries have thus tended to be Planning and Finance, those that have the broadest, multi-sectoral remit. Technical areas of work were carried out by the specialist UN agencies which broadly speaking include FAO working on agriculture, the World Food Programme working with food aid and the International Fund for Agricultural Development working on small-holder rural development projects. In-country, these organisations would tend to work with the more specialised ministries. Although these divisions may seem clear at the conceptual level, at the operational level the division of tasks and profile may reflect historical precedent, in-country presence, the expertise of certain individuals, the way in which a particular project has evolved, and so on. Maxwell and Shaw (1995) point out that there are actually 29 UN bodies (if the World Bank and the IMF are included) which are directly or indirectly concerned with food and food security issues, including five bodies concerned with food aid.

9. UNCED reaffirmed UNDP's co-ordinating role.

*38.24 UNDP, like UNEP, has a crucial role in the follow-up to the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development. Through its network of field offices it would foster the United Nations system's collective thrust in support of the implementation of Agenda 21, at the country, regional, interregional and global levels, drawing on the expertise of the specialized and other United Nations organizations and bodies involved in operational activities. The role of the resident representative/co-ordinator of UNDP needs to be strengthened in order to co-ordinate the field-level activities of the United Nations operational activities.*

*38.25 Its role should include the following:*

*(a) acting as the lead agency in organizing United Nations system efforts towards capacity-building at the local, national and regional levels;*

*(b) mobilizing donor resources on behalf of Governments for capacity-building in recipient countries and, where appropriate, through the use of the UNDP donor round-table mechanisms;*

*(c) strengthening its own programmes in support of the follow-up to the [UNCED] Conference without prejudice to the fifth programming cycle;*

*(d) assisting recipient countries, upon request, in the establishment and strengthening of national co-ordination mechanisms and networks related to activities for the follow-up to the Conference;*

*(e) assisting recipient countries, upon request, in co-ordinating the mobilization of domestic financial resources;*

*(f) promoting and strengthening the role and involvement of women, youth and other major groups in recipient countries in the implementation of Agenda 21."*

Earth Summit, Agenda 21. The United Nations Programme of Action from Rio, June 1992.

10. UNDP's comparative advantages are stated in the draft 1995 UNDP strategy paper, Water Resources Management as an Instrument for Sustainable Human Development.

*UNDP has long been involved at the national level in building the capacities of countries to plan and manage their own development. UNDP works with governments to help them identify, design and implement long-term development programmes; it supports countries in mobilising additional financial resources needed for their development activities; and it works to strengthen capacities in civil society for participatory grassroots development that empowers people and their non-governmental and community-based organisations.*

*UNDP works both upstream giving governments essential policy advice, and downstream providing funds for activities with short-term benefits. UNDP has traditionally played an important role as a dialogue partner both to developing country governments and to civil society.*

*With a network of 136 Country Offices worldwide, UNDP has the largest on-the-scene representation of any development assistance organization. The Resident Representatives who head UNDP Country Offices are usually also Resident Co-ordinators of UN operational activities for development, as well. This function allows a multi-agency, cohesive body of technical expertise for sustainable development to be brought to bear.*

*While UNDP's core funding has declined in recent years like that of other UN specialized agencies, it has succeeded in substantially increasing the level of its special funds, such as the GEF. In addition, recent changes in programming rules taken by the Executive Council now permit UNDP, rather than its client countries, to determine the allocation of 40 per cent of its funding. This gives UNDP a new potential to focus and concentrate its programme funding.*

11. In September 1994, FAO and UNDP issued a joint statement on co-operative action to promote food security, which again reflects the multi-sectoral role of UNDP. Although it states that *FAO and UNDP each have unique strengths*

*and responsibilities in the fields of food and agriculture, and broad-based human development, respectively, there has been no subsequent agreement on their roles in taking this joint initiative forward.*

12. The UN System-wide Special Initiative on Africa (March 1996) does not accord a role to UNDP in food security (which is to be led by FAO, with inputs from WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD and UNICEF). However, UNDP and UNSO will lead the work on sustainable livelihoods in environmentally marginal areas, which is likely to include sustainable agriculture and food security. It seems that UNDP has found it easier to establish a role for itself in marginal areas (especially given that FAO's low-income food deficit country programme focuses on high potential areas) than in food security *per se*, which many regard as FAO's domain.

### **UNDP experience in carrying out its mandate in sustainable agriculture and food security**

13. UNDP experience in this area can be seen in the funding of sustainable agriculture and food security projects, project and programme reviews, and relevant expertise within UNDP. UNDP data indicate that funding of all agricultural projects (excluding forestry) has been running at roughly US\$70 million per annum over the period 1992-1996. If the cost-sharing component is included (since a UNDP strategy may also influence this expenditure) the figure increases to nearly US\$85 million per annum. Projects in Africa account for 35% of the UNDP funded component and projects in Asia 32%. Since the first project funding cycle (1972-1976), nominal expenditure on agricultural projects steadily increased from US\$41 million, reaching US\$97 million per annum by 1987-1991, but dropping back in the current cycle. These data, however, exclude projects which are not principally agricultural but which have an agricultural component, and moreover, may exclude some categories of agricultural project.<sup>1</sup>

14. UNDP's former Central Evaluation Office publishes reviews of selected projects and programmes. A review of UNDP experience in Agricultural Development Support Services (Feedback, 2/1991) includes the following statement:

*The study confirms previous findings on development projects in the agricultural sector. Sustainability of project outputs leaves much to be desired. Three projects are deemed successful, while 52 are marred by institutions not working after project completion, equipment not being used, training programmes that have not reached the target group and a general lack of communication between project and target group.*

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<sup>1</sup> Note that earlier reporting by SEED indicates higher levels of funding than those implied by the data provided to the consultants. Earlier reporting by SEED shows that the sum of UNDP expenditure on four categories of agricultural project (land and water, agricultural development services, crops and livestock) rose from US\$72 million per annum in the period 1972-1976, to US\$153 million in the period 1987-1991.

A review of livestock development projects (Feedback, 1/1992) also highlighted poor links between projects and beneficiaries and potential problems with impact and sustainability. This experience is not dissimilar to that of other organisations. Several donors reduced aid to the agricultural sector during the eighties for a number of reasons, including poor performance of agricultural sector projects.

15. Certain UNDP initiatives in the broad area of sustainable agriculture and food security are particularly associated with SEED. SEED's former technical adviser established the SANE project (Sustainable Agriculture Networking and Extension). Its principal goal is to *enhance capacity building and human resource development in the area of sustainable agriculture through agroecological training, participatory research, policy advocacy and information networking*. SANE has produced a number of publications which promote sustainable agriculture. Likewise, the work of UNSO (which falls within SEED) relates partly to agriculture. It focuses on drought preparedness and mitigation; sustainable water management in the drylands; national desertification funds; environment information systems; pastoral development in the drylands; and national and sub-regional action programmes.

16. In response to budget cuts and pressure from donors, UNDP has been undergoing a number of organisational changes. The regional bureaux have had to cut posts and Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS) has been reorganised. The development of thematic strategies and the establishment of SEED, are part of this process.

17. SEED was created in 1994 to bring together substantive technical capacity on environment and energy issues within BPPS. The Division has a staff of approximately 50 but only six positions are core-funded, since most of the above programmes have extra-budgetary funding. It includes the following units.

- Capacity 21 (dealing with implementation of UNCED recommendations)
- UNSO
- Global Environmental Facility (dealing with the UNDP-managed component)
- Energy Unit
- Natural Resources Unit (agriculture, water and forestry)

18. One of SEED's functions is to provide technical backstopping, but it is currently unable to do this for sustainable agriculture and food security. The Principal Agricultural Adviser has recently retired and a replacement has not yet been recruited. However, it is anticipated that this core-funded position will be filled by September 1996. Although individual members of staff in the Regional Bureaux may have relevant expertise, depending on their background and the emphasis of particular country programmes, it is clear that UNDP HQ capacity in this area is currently very weak.

19. This consultancy was principally concerned with food security, with most emphasis on UNDP's role in relation to food access issues. Although within SEED, food security issues are viewed by many as almost synonymous with sustainable

agriculture, this interpretation or emphasis does not reflect UNDP's comparative advantage (which lies more with the more multi-sectoral access issues affecting household food security, and not in the technical issues covered by FAO), and is probably not consistent with the views of the Regional Bureaux staff . Given the current reorganisation of UNDP, and a degree of tension between divisions losing staff and those seen to be increasing, there is particular pressure on BPPS to produce outputs considered useful by the rest of UNDP. Within SEED, this is felt especially strongly, because of their remit to experiment with their structure and approach (Centre of Experimentation).

20. It is important therefore that the Regional Bureaux are fully involved in the development of a food security strategy and that they perceive it to be a useful and relevant tool. Although most staff in the Regional Bureaux with whom the strategy was discussed appear to welcome an initiative on food security (and mostly stressed this aspect of it rather than sustainable agriculture), there was a general view that strategies would vary at the regional level. (Additionally, there was some feeling within the Regional Bureau for Africa that they should lead in the development of a food security strategy).

#### **Previous UNDP proposals for work in this area and other strategies**

21. Since November 1993, SEED's work on agriculture has, broadly speaking, followed a strategy which had three goals (von Mallinckrodt, 1995):

- apply a new sustainable agriculture concept in the field
- achieve a common understanding/approach to agriculture and sustainable food security with all relevant development partners
- create awareness and capacity in UNDP to move from funding agent to active and substantive player status

22. In September 1994, UNDP and FAO issued a joint statement on collaboration in food security.

*To meet the demand of a rapidly rising world population and to stem the high and growing incidence of hunger and malnutrition, while at the same time conserving the production capacity of the natural resource base, is an immense challenge confronting the international community today. It is in response to this challenge that the Heads of FAO and UNDP have decided to promote, together with other partners, a concerted global effort to build the foundations for sustainable food security based on increased food production, sustainable use of natural resources, better access, and improved equity....*

*....Achieving significant progress in food security requires changes in four areas:  
(a) targeting efforts and investments towards sustainable food security;  
(b) building essential capacities;*

- (c) *creating an enabling policy environment; and*  
(d) *enhancing awareness of food security situations and trends.*

Press Release on co-operative action to promote sustainable food security: a joint declaration by the Heads of FAO and UNDP, 21 September 1994.

23. Four areas of enhanced co-operation were highlighted:

- increasing the relative importance of joint food security-related activities and projects, mobilising additional resources and making more efficient use of these resources
- developing co-operative activities in support of the FAO Special Programme in Support of Food Security for Low-Income Food-Deficit Countries (LIFDCs)
- strengthening the policy dialogue between the two institutions and their efforts to create a policy environment favourable to sustainable food security
- increasing co-ordination of technical co-operation with the aim to achieve greater synergy.

However, as discussed above, there has been little substantive collaboration between UNDP and FAO as a result of this initiative.

24. UNDP produced a discussion paper titled, *Proposal for a collaborative United Nations Sustainable Food Security Response System* (Von Mallinckrodt *et al*, 1995). The system is described as ... *an activity-based strategic plan intended to collect together and apply existing (but scattered) knowledge, skills, capacities and solutions in a way which avoids the often fragmented, unsystematic and individually isolated activities which have previously addressed food security.* The proposal emphasised production and access issues, as well as chronic and transitory cases of food insecurity. It stressed the importance of local ownership, capacity-building, participation, respect for local knowledge and capabilities, gender issues, local production and self-reliance, socio-economic issues, sustainability - of process and agriculture - and environment and natural resources. It proposed a number of actions including: food security workshops, country assessments, food security mapping, design and implementation of appropriate programmes based on sustainable human development principles, impact assessment and food security monitoring. UNDP proposed to co-ordinate the initiative with execution by national governments and inputs from appropriate specialist agencies. Although discussed with FAO in May 1995, no agreement to proceed was reached. Moreover, UNDP has not secured funding for the proposal. However, FAO's own LIFDC programme does now reflect many of the principles outlined in the UNDP proposal (including gender issues, participation and ownership), although it concentrates on high potential areas within those countries.

25. SEED has produced draft strategies on water and energy, and UNSO (a SEED unit) has also produced strategies on water management and pastoral development. SEED had hoped to learn from the process of strategy development, to foster a greater sense of ownership of the strategies within UNDP, and hence facilitate their adoption. The latter is a pressing need given the view expressed by

the Regional Bureaux that BPPS strategies are largely irrelevant to the country programmes. The perceived irrelevance apparently stems from the following:

- (a) most project concepts worked into proposals are approved (Country Programmes can themselves approve expenditure up to US\$1 million, the Regional Bureaux can approve projects up to US\$3 million, and BPPS need only be consulted on larger projects); and
- (b) the Resident Representative has to deal with proposals from the government which may bear little relation to UNDP priorities and policies, and the current system neither equips nor obliges him/her to adopt the policies.

## **PART B**

### **The goal and purpose of UNDP work on enhancing food access**

26. UNDP has had global programmes broadly related to sustainable agriculture and food security for the last twenty five years. During the period 1992 to 1996 almost US\$344 million went towards projects in these areas. This includes expenditure of US\$40 to 60 million with the CGIAR centres and funding of many FAO projects. SEED was formed in 1995, specifically to absorb the strategic and technical resource functions for UNDP global programmes in the NR sector. It has a budget of up to US\$2 million to support strategy development activities.

The ODA-supported Centre of Experimentation (COE) Initiative is helping SEED to:

- increase its effectiveness and impact (in terms of both technical/professional expertise and how it operates)
- integrate itself more fully and potently within BPPS and with the Regional Bureaux, and assure complementarity and synergy with other UN agencies
- better serve the Country Offices to accomplish UNDP's mission.

The successful development and implementation of thematic strategies for use by Country Offices is an important element of the COE initiative. These are, to date, Energy, Water, Forests, Food Security and Sustainable Agriculture, in addition to those being developed by UNSO.

27. In pursuing sustainable human development, UNDP rightly stresses the importance of food security which is closely linked to four of UNDP's priorities.

*Poverty eradication - access to food is a basic human entitlement and the first preoccupation of the poorest. Access to food can be improved by reducing the costs of bought food (by increasing supply, reducing production costs, post-harvest interventions, subsidy or trade), increasing incomes of individuals and households, or increasing household food production.*

*Improving the status of women - women are key players in food security, in food production, in food preparation, in food processing and trade, and in the provision of food for their families especially children. Interventions in food security can play a pivotal role, by addressing women's needs and food security issues simultaneously.*

*Creating jobs - food security links closely with sustainable livelihoods through the potential to improve food production and livelihoods in rural areas, and because the poor need jobs and incomes with which to purchase food.*

*Protecting the environment - all strategic initiatives must involve sustainable processes and protect the environment for on-going use by future generations.*

(The fifth area emphasised by UNDP is governance, and food security can be linked to this priority too, particularly in relation to effective planning mechanisms and consideration of economically marginal populations and regions).

28. UNDP and FAO agreed in September 1994 to co-operate on activities to promote sustainable food security, with special emphasis on low-income, food deficit countries. The two agencies recognise that although progress has been made in raising per capita food production world-wide, global food supplies are not equally distributed, either across or within countries. In Africa, for instance, per capita food production has been falling.

29. Food security concerns both food availability and access to food. Clearly there is a need to promote agricultural production programmes since there is general agreement that world food supplies will have to double by 2025 because of continued population growth and increases in income. The FAO Special Programme on Food Production for Food Security in LIFDCs seeks to address food security principally through focus on high potential areas. This focus directly improves the food security and incomes of the food secure; and indirectly improves access of the food insecure by increasing surpluses and hence reducing food prices; and by improving their incomes through (medium to long-term) economic growth multipliers. Such an approach is important where a food production deficit is projected, and where there is unlikely to be adequate income to import food supplies. Moreover, it is entirely consistent with structural adjustment policy seeking to encourage economic growth through market mechanisms and the efficient allocation of resources.

30. However, in the short term such an approach may do little to improve the position of the food insecure, for whom food access is constrained by low incomes. This suggests that, regardless of the long term food supply balance, there is a need for measures which will alleviate food stress experienced by the most vulnerable groups. Emphasis on this aspect is most consistent with UNDP's focus on SHD and comparative advantage.

31. A draft Project Memorandum is attached (Annex 1) which develops the case for ODA support to UNDP in enhancing food access based on a goal and purpose agreed with UNDP geographical and technical specialists.

## **PART C**

### **Mechanisms for developing a food security strategy**

32. The strategy should incorporate the following points:

- Mobilising support for indigenous capacity building (*making the diminishing resources go further by using local experts; encouraging sustainable national ownership of development activities*)
- Encouraging countries to create a supportive macro-economic legal, institutional and regulatory climate for sustainable food security, (*developing the strategy in a manner that fosters a sense of ownership, and willingness to implement enabling policies, in preference to dependence on donor-imposed conditionality clauses*).
- Contributing to innovative demonstration projects to promote the rapid development and dissemination of key technologies for sustainable food security (*activities here need advice from specialists once the strategy has been developed*).
- Supporting the formulation and implementation of national food security Action Programmes linking activities to goals and including means of assessing progress, risks and necessary interventions outside of the control of the Programme. (*This could be a logframe approach to identifying goals, purposes, outputs, activities, indicators of achievement, assumptions and risks*)

33. SEED has a natural resources mandate. Food security is a multi-sectoral issue which requires contributions from all the BPPS Units, covering poverty, gender, sustainable livelihoods and governance as well as natural resources. Regional Bureaux, specifically Africa, Asia and the Arab States, have set up their own food security contact points and, in the case of Africa Bureau, a food security task force. There is, however, no UNDP-wide leadership in developing a global food security strategy and little, if any, strategic work being done. Given the fragmented interests and perceived ownership of food security, it is important for UNDP to agree at senior management level where the food security focal point will reside. However, it is equally important that the Regional Bureaux, and country programmes, whose needs the strategy will attempt to address, are fully involved in and able to influence the development of the strategy.

34. Following the retirement of Friedel Mumm von Mallinckrodt (Principal Technical Adviser) there has been a gap in taking forward UNDP thinking on the food security question. FAO have taken the opportunity, following the joint UNDP/FAO Food Security Task Force meeting, to amplify their strategy, Food

Production in Support of Food Security in Low-income Food Deficit Countries. FAO's approach now combines a number of the features of the UNDP 1995 proposal, including focus on staple foods, focus on high potential areas, use of demonstrations as a point of entry, development of water management and irrigation potential, conservation of the natural resource base, preserving social equity, participatory analysis of constraints and opportunities, policy measures, capacity building and investment to remove constraints, partnership philosophy, national ownership and mobilisation of FAO experience and expertise. The UNDP role should be to broaden the impact of its projects by specifying food security goals which take account of the access problems of the food insecure.

35. The UN System-wide Special Initiative for Africa lists 20 priority topics in which the UN Agencies have agreed to co-operate. Priority 7 covers Food Security with Special Emphasis on Women and it is interesting to note that the Co-operating Agencies are FAO, WFP, UNIFEM, IFAD and UNICEF, with FAO being the lead Agency. In contrast UNDP and UNSO are listed as lead agencies with respect to work in marginal areas - which again reflects a perceived concentration and comparative advantage in issues relating to more vulnerable populations. UNDP can play a role in highlighting the broader aspects of food security, and it is important that this is accepted within the UN system.

36. It is likely to be generally accepted within UNDP that BPPS/SEED take the lead in developing UNDP's food security strategy. However, the involvement of the Regional Bureaux in the development of the strategy must be encouraged from the outset agreed at Assistant Administrator level. The collaboration of a selection of senior Resident Representatives is also a crucial factor in ensuring that the strategy is relevant and operational. The description of the strategy as 'a tool for Country Offices' was frequently made in relation to the practical application of strategies. It is also interesting to note that a survey of UNDP Resident Representatives showed that more than half asked for more cohesive support and advice from Headquarters.

37. The Regional Bureau for the Arab States (includes Sudan, Somalia and Djibouti in sub-Saharan Africa) is commissioning a review of its agriculture projects (on which we were asked to comment). The involvement of BPPS/SEED in such reviews would greatly increase its knowledge of successes and failures and of the requirements for a practical food security strategy.

38. A logical framework is attached (Annex 2) which sets out a food security strategy for UNDP with associated outputs, activities and assumptions.

## **PART D**

### **Human resource, information and dissemination needs**

39. SEED has now issued Terms of Reference for the appointment of a Principal Technical Adviser in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security as a core-funded D-

1 appointment (Annex 3). This is a welcome appointment following a period of six months in which there has been no focal point for addressing these areas of work. We have recommended that the successful applicant is experienced in the field of sustainable agriculture with a sound knowledge of current food security principles. ODA support should focus on the development, implementation and monitoring of a food security strategy backed by country-level inputs and the preparation of a manual and training for Country Offices on food security principles.

40. The early development of the strategy should involve leading international research institutions including IFPRI, NRI, MSU, IDS etc. World Bank should also be involved from the outset in view of its funding importance.

41. FAO, UNDP, WFP, IFAD and UNICEF all have substantial activities relating to food security and it is not intended that UNDP should develop expertise in the technologies relating to food and agriculture. A joint UNDP/FAO Task Force meeting in Rome in May 1995 agreed to delineate operational field responsibilities and the principle should be mutually recognised that UNDP would focus on those areas of sustainable food security which fall outside of agricultural technology. However, it may be appropriate for UNDP to consider which circumstances or areas of agricultural technology meet SFS objectives and are therefore suitable for funding.

42. There are no UNDP in-house reference materials which provide an overview of food security principles for use in Country Offices. This is an important area to support. A manual should be prepared which not only sets out the principles, but also provides guidelines on assessing projects in relation to the potential impact on food security. A separate consultancy is proposed to focus on the preparation of the manual.

43. It is essential that Country Offices are involved in the development of the strategy and are trained in its use. A series of country visits and workshops are proposed to meet these needs.

## ABBREVIATIONS

BPPS	Bureau for Programme and Policy Support
COE	Centre of Experimentation
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation of the UN
GEF	Global Environmental Facility
IDS	Institute for Development Studies
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFPRI	International Food Policy Research Institute
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LIFDC	Low income food deficit country
MSU	Michigan State University
NR	Natural resources
ODA	Overseas Development Administration
SANE	Sustainable Agriculture Networking and Extension
SEED	Sustainable Energy and Environment Division
SFS	Sustainable food security
SHD	Sustainable Human Development
UN	United Nations
UNCED	United Nations Conference on the Environment and Development
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNIFEM	United Nations Development Fund for Women
UNSO	United Nations Sudano-Sahelian Office
WFP	World Food Programme
WRI	World Resources Institute

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## **DRAFT PROJECT MEMORANDUM FOR ODA SUPPORT TO UNDP IN DEVELOPING A FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY**

### **Project Title**

Assistance to UNDP's Sustainable Energy and Environment Division (SEED) to co-ordinate and begin to implement a food security strategy.

### **Abbreviated Title**

UNDP Food Security Strategy Development

### **Project Description**

The project will assist UNDP to develop a food security strategy relevant to UNDP policy and the needs of the food insecure. It will take the strategy forward to a pilot implementation phase taking account of UNDP operational procedures.

### **Project Summary**

UNDP has a mandate to co-ordinate inputs by UN agencies at a country level. It is also mandated to assist capacity building to improve national skills in programming and co-ordination. Although FAO is the lead UN agency on food and agricultural issues, and should be recognised as such, it is important for UNDP to be able to integrate food security issues for the poor within its own Programmes; and to act in, and provide advice on, an intelligent customer capacity for the work of others on food security planning. The project will set up a strategy to: (a) develop a food security policy framework; (b) ensure the framework is acceptable to UNDP Regional Programmes and to other UN Agencies; and (c) provide training to selected Country Offices to begin integrating the framework within their own Programmes.

### **Project Goal**

To strengthen the impact of UNDP on household food security.

### **Project location**

UNDP Headquarters in New York and UNDP Country Offices in Africa, the Arab States and Asia.

### **Starting and finishing dates**

1 September 1996 to 31 March 1998

### **Project purpose**

The project will develop and begin to implement a strategy with UNDP staff to provide a food security focus to relevant UNDP country programmes. (An outline logical framework is attached at Annex 2).

### **Development problems or needs**

In pursuing sustainable human development, UNDP rightly stresses the importance of food security which is closely linked to four of UNDP's priorities.

*Poverty eradication - access to food is a basic human entitlement and the first preoccupation of the poorest.*

*Improving the status of women - women are key players in food security, in food production, food preparation, food processing and trade, and in the provision of food for their families, especially children.*

*Creating jobs - food security links closely with sustainable livelihoods through the potential to improve food production and livelihoods in rural areas, and because the poor need jobs and incomes with which to purchase food*

*Protecting the environment - all strategic initiatives must involve sustainable processes and protect the environment for on-going use by future generations.*

### **Project contribution to resolving these problems or needs**

The project will provide a food security specialist to the Sustainable Energy and Environment Division of UNDP's Bureau for Policy and Programme Support (BPPS). SEED has a natural resources mandate while food security is a multi-sectoral issue requiring contributions from other BPPS Units which cover poverty, gender, sustainable livelihoods and governance. Regional Bureaux, specifically Africa, the Arab States and Asia, have set up their own food security contact points and, in the case of Africa Bureau, a food security task force. There is, however, no UNDP-wide leadership in developing a global food security strategy and little, if any strategic work being done.

The specialist will assist in strengthening the impact of UNDP projects by specifying food security goals which take account of food production and access problems of the food insecure.

In addition to the support provided by this project, SEED has now issued Terms of Reference for the appointment of a Principal Technical Adviser in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security as a core-funded D-1 appointment. This is a welcome appointment following a period of six months in which there has been no focal point for addressing these areas of work. The successful applicant is likely to be an expert in the field of sustainable agriculture with a sound knowledge of current food security principles. The ODA specialist will focus on the development, implementation and monitoring of the food security strategy.

### **Geographic focus of the project**

The project will be based at UNDP Headquarters in New York and will be responsible for the development of UNDP's global strategy on food security. The geographic focus will be Africa, the Arab States and Asia, and specifically a selection of UNDP Country Offices within these regions.

### **The identified target institutions**

The project will target Technical Support Divisions and Regional Bureaux within UNDP Headquarters in New York; UNDP Country Offices in four countries in two regions selected from Africa, the Arab States and Asia; other relevant UN Agencies and collaborating organisations in-country.

### **The proposed promotion pathways for the uptake of the project outputs**

Project outputs will be promoted using UNDP Regional Bureaux and Country Offices. A manual or guidebook on food security principles will be prepared; and training will be provided for staff of at least three Country Offices in using the guidebook which will contain instructions for assessing, monitoring and evaluating projects.

Further extension of the outputs will be the responsibility of UNDP's BPPS, who have approved a permanent appointment in HQ to cover sustainable agriculture and food security issues.

### **Links to work already funded by ODA**

The ODA funded Centre of Experimentation Initiative is helping SEED to:

- increase its effectiveness and impact (in terms of both technical/professional expertise and how it operates);
- integrate itself more fully and potently within BPPS and with the Regional Bureaux, and assure complementarity and synergy with other UN agencies;
- better serve the Country Offices to accomplish UNDP's mission.

In addition UNDP work in this area is consistent ODA's focus on poverty and those vulnerable to food insecurity.

### **Work previously done or currently being pursued towards the purpose, outputs and activities of the project**

See: Report on a visit to UNDP New York to assist in the development of a food security strategy within UNDP by Paul Hindmarsh and Ann Gordon, Natural Resources Institute, Chatham.

### **Project outputs**

A strategy will be developed which will describe UNDP's goals and objectives relating to food security and how those goals and objectives might be achieved. A guidebook or manual will be prepared which will provide guidance on implementing the strategy. Training courses will be conducted for staff in HQ and in the Country Offices to assist the introduction of the strategy.

### **Project activities**

1. Prepare a preliminary discussion document outlining a strategy which will ensure that current food security thinking is incorporated into UNDP activities in the field.
2. Develop the strategy with:

international research organisations  
UNDP Regional Bureaux  
UNDP Country Offices  
UNDP implementing agencies

3. Prepare a guidebook or manual for UNDP Country Offices describing food security principles; reviewing current thinking; relating food security principles to UNDP goals and objectives; presenting a framework for selecting projects for funding; and providing instructions on monitoring and evaluation techniques.

**PROJECT LOGICAL FRAMEWORK FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF A  
FOOD SECURITY STRATEGY WITHIN UNDP**

	<b>Narrative Summary</b>	<b>Measurable Indicators</b>	<b>Means of Verification</b>	<b>Important Assumptions</b>
<b>Super goal</b>	To promote sustainable human development in UNDP Programme countries			
<b>Goal</b>	To strengthen the impact of UNDP on household food security			
<b>Purpose</b>	To develop a food security strategy to influence Country Programmes	Strategy adopted by Country Programmes in two regions by September 1998		
<b>Outputs</b>	<p>1. Food security policy and principles</p> <p>2. Project cycle and management procedures</p> <p>3. Resourcing and training programme</p>	<p>1. Draft policy and principles paper ready for approval by February 1997</p> <p>2. Strategy developed incorporating output 1 and project cycle and management procedures</p> <p>3.1 Preliminary training activities completed by March 1998</p> <p>3.2 Additional resourcing and training recommendations approved by March 1998</p>		Necessary resources available to support adoption

<p><b>Activities</b></p>	<p>1.1 Form a Task Force of key in-house specialists</p> <p>1.2 Review Country Programmes to identify key contributions to strategy development</p> <p>1.3 Discussion paper prepared and circulated on food security policy and principles</p> <p>1.4 Draft policy and principles paper prepared for approval by senior management</p> <p>2.1 Review and adapt UNDP project management procedures for food security projects</p> <p>2.2 Develop preliminary strategy based on 1.4 and 2.1 above</p> <p>2.3 Introduce proposed food security strategy through Workshops in selected countries and adapt and modify as necessary, taking full account of the responsibilities of other agencies</p> <p>2.4 Finalise the draft strategy and submit for UN agency discussion at senior management level</p> <p>3.1 Prepare and distribute a manual on implementation of food security policies, principles and procedures</p>	<p><b>Inputs required</b></p> <p>Food Security Specialist</p> <p>Visits by two reviewers to six countries in Africa, Arab States and Asia</p> <p>Visits by three resource persons to four countries in two Regions to conduct Strategy formulation Workshops</p> <p>Two Regional Training Workshops to begin implementing the Strategy</p>		<p>UNDP management agree on lead Division</p> <p>Core-funded Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security Specialist in post</p> <p>Full consultation achieved within UNDP and with other relevant organisations</p> <p>Food Security Specialist in post by September 1996</p> <p>UN Agencies agree respective roles (including that of UNDP).</p>
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	<p>3.2 Conduct training workshops to introduce the strategy</p> <p>3.3 Make recommendations to UNDP senior management for additional resources and training as required.</p>			
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Job Description

Post Title: Principal Technical Advisor, Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security

Grade: D-1

Duty Station: New York

Organizational Unit: Sustainable Energy and Environment Division/BPPS

Background:

The appointment of a Principal Technical Advisor in Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security (SAFS) is part of UNDP's efforts to build up internal capacity in this subject, which relates centrally to UNDP's goals of poverty alleviation and environmental regeneration and has been identified as one of the areas of focus for UNDP in the years to come. The Advisor would lead a small team of specialists in food security and sustainable agriculture that UNDP is in the process of putting together (principally through secondments) to help UNDP increase its substantive strength in this critical area. Special emphasis will be given to issues of poverty alleviation and environmental sustainability. Subjects of particular concern include the relationships between food production and access, between sustainability and productivity, and among poverty, food needs and environmental degradation; biodiversity and sustainable use of genetic resources; gender roles and analysis; and participatory approaches.

Summary of Duties:

The Principal Technical Advisor is responsible for the overall management and supervision of the work of the Sustainable Agriculture and Food Security team within SEED. Under the direct supervision of the Director of SEED, the Principal Technical Advisor is responsible for the following tasks:

1. Assist UNDP in developing strategies and policies in the area of sustainable agriculture and food security;
2. Provide advice and support to other SEED Units (especially GEF and UNSO), to Regional Bureaux and to Country Offices on (a) programme identification, design, appraisal, management, monitoring and feedback; and (b) the formulation of new Country Programmes;
3. Assess human resources needs of UNDP in the subject area and assist UNDP in building its own capacity accordingly;

4. Coordinate the work of the sustainable agriculture and food security team within UNDP and ensure that this work is fully integrated with the work of other relevant units in UNDP;
5. Further develop UNDP's network of collaborators in the area of sustainable agriculture and food security and assist UNDP in mobilizing resources for the promotion of programmes in this area;
6. Manage the resources of SEED dedicated to this area;
7. Assist UNDP in developing guidelines, tools and training in the area of sustainable agriculture and food security;
8. Assist UNDP in the production of technical papers in this area; and
9. Develop collaboration agreements and strengthen partnerships with key partner agencies, including NGOs, international institutions, and other external agencies.

Qualifications:

1. Advanced degree in agricultural science, agricultural economics or related area.
2. At least 15 years of professional experience in the subject area, to include specific experience in development assistance.
3. Resident professional experience in developing countries for at least 5 years.
4. Proven managerial ability and excellent interpersonal skills.
5. Excellent oral and written communication skills in the English language.
6. Fluency in a second language (preferably Spanish or French), and a good working knowledge of a third UN language (Spanish, French or Arabic).
7. Ability to work in a multi-cultural environment.